The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

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Songs in the Night.

Songs in the night the shepherd folk averred
Fell from the radiant angels in their flight,
The preparations of our peace conferred
Songs in the night.

O, Thou that dwellest in the holy height,
Still falls to earth Thy same benefic word,
To them that sit in shadow moves the light.

For ever, while the murky world is stirred
By Love who dreams its blackness into white,
Through all the winters of our years are heard
Songs in the night.

AMBROSE BENNETT.

So Gracious is the Time.

Through the happy Christmas hours
Voices sweet are heard above;
Angels scatter fairest flowers
From their blessed garden bowers,
Turning here to deeds of love.

Through the merry Christmas cheer
All our homes with gladness ring;
Paradise once more is here;
With the friends we love so dear,
We can hear what angels sing.

WILLIAM BRUNTON.

A Spurious Liberalism.

A SERMON

BY THE REV. JOSEPH WOOD.

MATTHEW v. 17.—"I am come not to destroy, but to fulfil."

These words were spoken about certain ancient rules of life and conduct, rules concerning such gross and palpable matters as murder, adultery, revenge, and the like. We may describe these rules as the Ethics of Moses. Christ came with a wider, freer gospel than that of Moses. He did not lay down definite rules dealing with particular bits of conduct, he rather went straight to the condition of heart and mind out of which conduct flows. "Attend to this and that aspect of conduct," said Moses. "Nay," said Jesus, "Attend to the springs of thought and feeling which are the sources of conduct." He laid the emphasis on the inward state; his beatitudes are not rules and commandments, they are the pictures of a certain disposition, temper, spirit and character. Let the spirit and disposition of a man be right and his conduct will take care of itself. Jesus came in fact to deliver men from bondage to rules that they might live in the spirit of liberty.

But there was a danger in all this, lest men should think that the new morality was less exacting than the old, that it meant the relaxation of duty, and that men need not be so particular about conduct as in other days. "Ah, no!" says Jesus, "My Gospel is not the destruction but the transfiguration of duty, not the narrowing of its scope, but its enlargement. The flower fulfils the seed by being more and finer than the seed, not by being less: the man fulfils the child not by the death and passing away of the child but by broadening out to a full measure what it was in the child to become; the noon-day fulfils the dawn by flooding all earth and heaven with the light which first was dim and trembling. My teaching does not destroy anything of the old moral law, it fulfils it; that is, carries it on to wider ranges of action and to more intimate delicacies of thought. It was enough for Moses that a man should not kill, but *I* say unto *you*, "Whosoever is angry with his brother without cause committeth sin." Do you ask less from the man than the child because the man is no longer bound about by the rules of his father's house? Not so; you expect more. He is free now to live his own life, but his freedom carries with it a greater burden of responsibility. The rules of his childhood were narrow and definite; in manhood he escapes into the broad and universal. But he soon finds that the broad is more exacting than the narrow, and that manhood with its larger liberty tightens immeasurably the sense of obligation. The Liberal Theology of Jesus deepens the sense of personal duty and the awfulness of living. If it destroyed the old moral obligations, if it loosened their hold on men, if it made men think less of conduct, it would be a spurious Liberalism. If with the departure of the old fear of hell, for instance, the old fear of wrong-doing were to pass away—if men concluded that the old struggle of the spirit with the flesh had become unnecessary since Jesus had revealed God as the Father rather than the Judge, then his broader gospel would be a curse rather than a blessing.

You all see that it is a spurious Liberalism which thinks that a broader, more lovable, more kindly view of God means that duty is less in scope and less imperative in obligation than of old. We ought to be afraid of any Theology which weakens the claims of duty or minimises the awfulness of sin. The motive of love is more exacting than the motive of fear. A son should be more obedient than a slave. Joy and gratitude and honour should lead men to be more dutiful than fear and prudence. Unless the broader and more Liberal teaching gives to watchfulness, righteousness and service deeper and sacreder meanings than before it is a false Liberalism.

But this idea has many afflictions. Look at it as it applies to

The Search and Concern for Truth.

In olden times men had such a concern for truth, truth of doctrine, truth of creed, truth of theology, that they attached salvation to its acceptance and eternal torture in hell to intellectual error. In the view of the Church intellectual error was far worse than moral defect. And so bigotry, cruelty, and persecution marked the history of the Church for ages. Truth was so important that it must be backed up and enforced by the secular arm, by rack and thumbscrew, by fire and sword, by pains and penalties. If the favour of God depended on the confession of a right creed, if heaven were the reward of a true view of certain intellectual problems concerning the eternal mysteries of Being, if all the future were a misery and an agony, or a benediction and a song, according as men held or denied the truth of the creeds, then it seemed a kindness to put men to a little pain here to save them from an eternity of pain hereafter. But we have come into a broader, more rational and more liberal view of these matters. We passionately affirm that it is a libel on God to say that He will doom a man to an eternity of torment for any intellectual error whatever. We denounce the idea that a man will be saved because of the correctness of his opinions, or that he will be lost because he cannot see eye to eye with Augustine, or Calvin, or even Paul. We triumphantly point to the fact that under wide varieties of opinion men and women of equal grace and goodness can be found, that saintly lives are lived in all the churches and under all forms of theological belief. We preach the broad, noble, liberal Gospel, that not every one who is intellectually right and can pronounce with the right accent

the right shibboleth, but every one who is humble, kind, loving, true in life, pure in heart, and Christ-like in temper, will stand approved of God.

But does this broader, more tolerant, and more liberal view mean that Truth doesn't matter? that we may be indifferent to the doctrines offered us? that one creed is as good as another? and that we are only narrow and bigoted in standing up for the truth as it comes to us? I sometimes fear that this is what our Liberalism does mean. And then it is a spurious Liberalism.

True Liberalism in religion is the utmost tolerance of all differences of opinion, the utmost concession to every man of the right of thinking and judging for himself, the utmost emphasis on moral and spiritual conditions as the only way of access to God's favour, together with the utmost personal loyalty to the truth as it shapes itself to us, and the utmost zeal to convince and persuade and win men over to the higher truth we rejoice in. Nothing can be a greater caricature of Liberalism in Theology than the idea that all creeds are equally good, all churches equally right, or that to be very eager about your own view of truth and very enthusiastic about your own church, and very anxious to get a way for your own broader, sweeter Gospel, is a sign of narrowness and Philistinism. Your broader Theology is to fulfil, not to destroy; to enable men the more readily to come at truth; to make the claims of truth—moral truth and intellectual truth alike—more sacred aud imperative now that truth is no longer enforced by fine and imprisonment. For truth does matter. It is of infinite importance that truth should at last prevail. God will overlook a thousand errors into which a man may fall in the honest search for truth, but what will be His condemnation of the man who does not search? The temper of mind which thinks it does not matter what a man believes, provided he is only kind and honest, is a spurious Liberalism. It does matter. I do not say it matters to the man's individual salvation from a future hell—that is a vulgar measure of what matters—but I do say that it matters to the salvation of the man's complete manhood; it matters to fulness of character, to perfection of soul; and it matters immensely to the final triumph of truth in the world. Is not the triumph of truth the triumph at last of the right and good? And truth will only finally triumph as each one of us in his sphere is earnest about it, loyal to as much of it as he sees, eager for its promotion by the instruments of right reason and moral insight.

Look at this idea again as it applies to

THE CHURCH TO WHICH ONE BELONGS.

In view of the broader conception of the church which belongs to our day, a view which denies the divinity of any particular church order and recognises that all churches are divine which produce good men and women—in view of this more Liberal ecclesiasticism, it is supposed to shew a narrow mind to be enthusiastic about one's own church. Now there is an analogy which may serve to set this matter in its true light. Our age has seen, has happily seen, the breakdown of many racial and national prejudices which once set men and empires in antagonism to one another. The insularity which once marked the Englishman is rapidly passing away before a more humanitarian and a more cosmopolitan spirit. We are learning to respect other peoples; we are beginning to feel the solidarity of the human family. Now in some minds the effect has been to weaken patriotic feeling and to make men indifferent to the special honour and welfare of their own country. Men have thought it narrow to love England more than France or Germany. No, they must be cosmopolitan and love all nations alike. That is a spurious Liberalism. On the contrary, he is the best cosmopolitan whose respect for others is rooted in the special affections of a particular patriotism. Always it turns out that he loves the wide human household best, who loves in a special way some definite household. We condemn the old narrowness which shut men up to their own country and refused to regard other persons and nations as equally intelligent, equally true, equally worthy of regard. But do you cure that narrowness by ceasing to regard your own race, your own country, and your own family with special honour? It is a shallow mistake to think that special preferences and affections mean narrowness of human sympathy. Try for a moment to picture a man who has no preferences. Behold him, loving everybody with

exactly the same sentiment; his father neither more nor less than all other old men, an unknown child just as much as his own. (Read the tragic story of Brand.) As for friends, he has none; or rather, you, I, any stranger, the Grand Turk if you will, are all equally his friends in degree and kind. Why, such a man is no man: he has, I can see, arms and legs, but I do not discover a heart in him. If he be really a living man, and not an automaton, I say that loving everyone alike he really loves no one. He is not a man at all, but only, as Carlyle said, a forked radish, with a curiously carved head!

So it is with the affectation which would have us regard all churches alike, on the plea that to love and care very much for our own church is a sign of narrowness. It is not so. As a matter of fact and history, the most generous and liberal and tolerant in their view of other churches are those who are most deeply attached to their own Church in particular, and who believe in promoting specially its welfare. Witness such men as Dean Stanley, the most devoted Anglican, yet the most appreciative of all good in other churches. It is not sectarian to care for our own Church above all others. It is sectarian when we claim that ours is the only true church.

Once more, apply this principle to

THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHURCH,

and the use we make of them. There, too, a freer method prevails, a method which is an advance upon the stricter method of a previous generation just in proportion as it serves more fully the purpose for which the Church exists. It is no longer a sin with us to be absent from public worship on Sunday; it is no longer reckoned to us for grace that our seat in Church knows us twice every Sunday. We have no scruples about writing a business letter on Sunday if the necessity arises, nor about reading a novel, or playing golf and tennis. No qualm of conscience troubles us as to Sunday boating and Sunday billiards. We claim that in these matters every man shall be a law unto himself. We have happily larger notions of what constitutes the sacredness of a Day of Rest, than these of the English Puritans or the Jewish Pharisees. There is, and we all rejoice in it, a less constrained observance of Sunday than in bygone days. But does that mean that Sunday is naught? has no special significance? is guarded from the ordinary life by no sacred sanctions? is to be spent exactly as all other days are spent on the plea that every day is the Lord's day? Well, as the man who pleads the reason for not loving his own father and mother especially that now he loves all men alike, so is the man who neglects to make Sunday something special because all days are sacred. For the man who loves all men alike does not love any one of them with a love that is worth a ha'porth of shavings, and he to whom no one day is specially the Lord's Day, it may be safely said has no Lord's Day at all. Our more liberal view of Sunday observance and Church going and the offices of public worship is only a grace in so far as it makes religion a more voluntary, a brighter, and a freer thing—not as it dispenses with religion. The broader view is to fulfil not to destroy. The larger liberty of Sunday is beautiful to us, not because it means the lowering of Sunday to the level of week-days, but because it means the raising of week-days to the level of Sundays. If it does that we rejoice in the new spirit that fills Sunday. It is a spurious Liberalism which having made an end of the old strict, narrow Sabbatarianism, thinks that the new freedom is to rob Sunday of all religious significance. Liberalism, to be true to itself, must not kill but develop. It is a spurious Liberalism which, having arrived at the position that there is no necessary virtue in Church going, proceeds, therefore, to abolish, as far as its own presence and influence goes, all public recognition of the soul's need of prayer and praise, of the hearts' yearning for better things, of the spirits life with God. The broad view of the church and Sunday is more exacting than the narrow. It demands that we fulfil not destroy, that we put these things to their best uses, that we make them serve our deepest needs. What is Sunday for? To concentrate attention for a little while on the side of life which is so much neglected in the push and press of common life; it is to give the inward spiritual man a quiet breathing time, and by the thoughts and feelings which are called forth in worship to touch the familiar things of other days with new hands and look

on them with new eyes. We keep Sunday now not because of any outward commandment. We claim for it the largest freedom. But we say it is a boon and privilege, an opportunity all too short for the culture of a man's diviner part, and that he who spends it in golf or at his ledger is putting to an inferior use an inestimable treasure. He does not make Sunday yield him its full value, but something considerably less. He is like a man who in changing sovereigns, is content to receive seven shillings and sixpence in the pound. The Broader view of Sunday is to make it a wider opening towards divine things—not that it should turn aside into a path where divine things have no approach. The observance of Sunday, its freedom from business, and its freedom from Pharisaic restrictions is by no ancient enactment, nor by any law of the State, but by Heaven's everlasting law that the life is more than meat, and that the life must have its special times of nourishment and care. The Broader view of Sunday is to give to its essential idea a more glorious fulfilment by making it more than ever a means of grace, the pearl of days, the flower of all the week. Our freer, more Liberal thought of Sunday is not for its secularisation but for its devotion more completely to the higher life.

The progress of Liberalism means the acceptance of new obligations to be true and holy. Free spiritual sympathy attempts more, achieves more than old strict commandments. The advance from dictation and despotism to the sway of the free affections will be followed by a more eager obedience and a profounder appreciation of the deep and sacred things both of life and worship.

For at the heart of Womanhood
The Child's great heart doth lie;
At Childhood's heart, the germ of good,
Lies God's Simplicity.
So sister, by thy womanhood
A baptism on thy brow,
For something dimly understood
And which though art not now;
But which within thee, all the time,
Maketh thee what thou art;
Maketh thee long and strive and climb—
The God-life at thy heart.

—*G. Macdonald.*

A Christmas Story.

"Make channels for the streams of love,
That they may broadly run;
And love has overflowing founts,
To fill them every one."

There it was again, the same thing they sang in church on Sunday, this time sung by a fresh, clear voice, and with a fervour that seemed to say how true it was for the singer. Its only effect upon Mary, however, as she walked wearily home from a hard day's work, was to make her bitter thoughts more bitter.

She could look into the window and see the singer in her pleasant home, surrounded by every evidence of thoughtful loving care, and she thought that girl might well sing about giving and receiving love; but as for herself she didn't feel that the world held any for her or wanted any from her.

Her father and mother were both dead, and her uncle had very unwillingly taken her into his family with the understanding that she was to make them as little trouble and expense as possible. She had been too unhappy to make friends, and she was sure she had not a gleam of sunshine in her life that she could pass on.

She went home and ate her supper in silence, and after doing what was expected of her as an equivalent for her board, she went to her room with the song still ringing in her ears, and tried to think it out for herself.

She remembered what the minister had said the Sunday before. His sermon was on Christmas giving, and he said that all Christmas gifts should be accompanied with a large love. That no matter how large or small the gift was, if love did not go with it it had failed as a *Christmas* gift, for Christmas meant the birth of Christ (which is peace and love) in our hearts, and the custom of making gifts was to help us to pass it on to the whole of mankind.

Then he said that every bit of love that we gave out left room for more to flow in, and that the greatest source of joy a person could have, was to keep the Divine Circulation in motion.

The words of the song and the thoughts of the sermon had persistently repeated themselves in her mind ever since, but she didn't see how they applied to her. How could she make

gifts when she had to spend all the money she earned on her clothes, and even then she was not dressed warmly enough to keep out the bitter cold. And as for love, she had none in her heart for anyone, for no one had any for her.

Could there be any truth in it? Was, perhaps, the last verse true, that we must share love if we would keep it, and that because she had ceased to give it she had ceased to have it? Did she have anything that she could give to others, or was there anything that she could do for others? The minister said, "A kind word." Yes, she could give that. "To give of what she had." Yes, she could do that if she were not too proud to give what was of so little value. "A pleasant look or a smile." Well, she *could* do that, though she hardly ever wanted to; but she would try it, for one day at any rate, if only to silence that persistent verse that haunted her so. She would either prove or disprove it.

So, with a firm resolve to give it a good trial, she went off to sleep.

When Mary awoke the next morning the snow was falling fast, and it was dark and cold, and she felt much disposed to grumble at the weather and her hard lot in having to go out into it; but she remembered her resolution, and went downstairs with a bright face and said: "Well, Auntie, I guess we shall have to work fast this morning to keep warm. Aren't you glad we're not lame, and have to sit still?" Her aunt looked at her in surprise, but kept on with her work and said nothing, so that Mary did not feel very much encouraged by her first venture. At breakfast, Frankie, a little boy of seven, began to tell about some little toy he had seen at the store for a cent. "All the other boys have got them," he said. "It seems as if I might have a cent to spend once in a while."

His mother shook her head. "You might just as well ask for a dollar as for a cent," said she, "for I haven't either to give."

Mary saw another chance. "I'll tell you what I'll do, Frankie," said she, "I shall be paid to-night, and when I come home I will buy it for you if you will keep the front path shovelled out for your mother."

"All right," said he. And she couldn't help feeling happy as she saw the glow of delight that came over his face. Then she put on her hat and cloak and started for her work.

As she turned around a cold corner she saw Jimmie, the boot-black, standing there, too cold and miserable even to whistle. And she wished she could help him, for she knew he would get very little work that day. It was pretty hard for her, but she knew that a pleasant word was all she had for him. So she mustered up courage and said with a smile, "I wish I could afford to have my boots blacked, Jimmie, so as to help you out."

He touched his hat quickly and said, "Thank you, miss; but a pleasant word is more than most of 'um give me."

She went on, feeling glad that she had spoken and tried to look pleasant and speak cheerfully whenever anyone looked at her. And at noontime, when the girls who lived at a distance collected in little groups to eat their lunch, she thought perhaps there would be a chance for her to exchange a pleasant greeting with somebody. But she had been in the habit of going off by herself and avoiding the others. So no one expected her, and she could not bring herself to join any of them. Finally, she saw a stranger, who had just come to the factory, standing alone, looking out of the window. So she timidly went up to her and said: "Won't you eat your lunch with me? I am all alone, and you seem to be."

The girl turned round and smiled, though the tears had been in her eyes. "Thank you," said she; "I was very lonely." And then she blushed and said: "I may as well tell you, some of the other girls asked me to sit with them. But they seem to have such nice dinners, and I have so little, that I was ashamed."

Here, then, was another chance to encourage and more opportunity for kind words, and Mary did her best. And when she went back to her work she was surprised to see how happy she felt.

Could it be that this warm, tender, uplifting feeling that seemed to be going all through her was the spirit of love flowing in, because she had been giving it out and making room for more. Why, she really felt as though she *wanted* to speak to everybody—as though she would like to help everybody. She didn't feel at all like

her old unhappy self, who thought she owed the whole world a grudge. And she began to plan, in spite of her poverty, how she could make somebody happy on the Christmas that was coming.

When her work was done and she went to the superintendent for her money, he asked her if she would wait for a moment as he would like to speak to her.

After the others had gone he came to her and said: "I have a sick wife at home, and always on Christmas Day it has been her habit to have some of the girls that she thought needed help and encouragement come to the house and spend the day with her; but she is feeling so miserable that she said to me this morning: 'I cannot comfort anybody nor entertain anybody this year, I am so miserable myself; but I am very lonely, and if you can bring home anyone that will bring some sunshine into the house, and some of the peace of Christmas, I wish you would.' "I have been watching the different girls to-day,' said he, "and I saw you as you went to the stranger so kindly and pleasantly, and made up my mind that what you could do for one you could do for another, and if you will I would like to have you dine with us to-morrow."

A flood of joy went over her heart like a burst of sunshine. To think that anybody could possibly want what she had to give; to think that somebody had seen in her face peace and kindness and love; the very things she had always thought were neither in the world for her, nor in her for anybody in the world. She thanked him, promised to come, and went on her way home, feeling that a new life would indeed begin for her on Christmas Day. It was only a one day's sowing, but what a harvest! She bought the toy for Frankie and went home with such a new look on her face that when she gave it to him he said, a little hesitatingly, "I like you."

When she told her aunt of the invitation, her aunt said rather surlily, "You seem very much pleased over it. I suppose you think you will get a fine dinner." Mary checked a hasty answer, and replied, "Yes, I suppose I shall, but I think that what makes me feels so happy is to think that somebody wants me."

Her aunt's face smoothed a little, and she said more graciously, "Well, to tell the truth, Mary, you can't expect folks to be very pleasant with you if you are not pleasant with them, and if you would be more like what you have been to-day when you are at home we might like you better." Mary had not the courage to tell her day's experience, but she simply said, "I'm going to try."

When she lay down to sleep that night life had for her a new interest which amounted almost to a feeling of joy; and now the song was singing itself in her heart with a new meaning, and, as her eyelids gradually closed, it seemed to float like a benediction over her.

"Make channels for the streams of lov
That they may broadly run;
And love has overflowing founts,
To fill them every one."

AMERICAN.

Broadly speaking, Shakespeare has no heroes, he has only heroines. There is hardly a play that has not a perfect woman in it, steadfast in grace, hope, and errorless purpose; Cordelia, Desdemona, Hermione, Imogen, Virgilia, Isabella, Perdita, Queen Catherine, Viola, Rosalind, Helena, are all faultless, conceived in the highest heroic type of humanity.—*Ruskin.*

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The Wesley Family Ghost.

Part I.—The Story.

In the month of December, 1716, the family of the Reverend Samuel Wesley (father of the celebrated John Wesley) Vicar of Epworth, a Lincolnshire village inhabited by flax-growers, was much disturbed by sounds that, with the simple credulity of those days, were without hesitation set down as supernatural.

Mr. Wesley, an elderly man of the old High Church principles, had in his youth produced some inflated poems, which Pope at one time intended to ridicule in the "Dunciad." As poor as Goldsmith's delightful vicar, the good man was as easy to deceive; and his Presbyterian parishioners had long persecuted him with untiring malignity. These rough free-men had houghed his cattle, injured his horses, and even threatened his life.

In extreme poverty the good old parson had consoled himself with his Hebrew books and his verses; and, aided by an excellent wife, had spent his time in educating his large family of sons and daughters, and trying to soften and civilise the coarse flax-growers, who hated everything he had been taught to love, honour, and admire. In faith, and in the pursuit of duty, he had pitched his tents among the sons of Kedar, and no threats or violence could induce him to quit that stoney place or those scoffing people. That he, a poor obscure village clergyman, should have been selected for what he considered undoubted supernaturnl sounds and phenomena, no doubt marked him out, in his own opinion, as a person destined to exercise great spiritual influence. He was a man of courage, however, and he set himself to observe the phenomena as became their extraordinary significance and importance. It was on the 21st of December, a little before 1 a.m., that this worthy man was awoke by nine distinct knocks, which seemed to come from the room next to his own. After every third knock there was a distinct pause. The rector, awakening his wife, sat up in bed, and quietly discussed the sounds. He pronounced at once that it was some drunken or mischievous disturber outside the house, and remembering his stout mastiff chained below, believed he could easily frighten off any would-be thief.

The next night, however, the Rector was again awoke, after he had been in bed and asleep some three hours, by the same sounds; but this time there were only six knocks, and they were fainter than before.

Nothing else was heard. On the morning of Sunday, the 23rd, however, the alarm spread, for, about seven in the dim morning, the rector's daughter, Emily, called her mother in a frightened and sudden way into the nursery, and told her that the strange noises could then be heard there. The careful mother instantly went, and, sure enough, heard the sounds first near and then under the bed. When Mrs. Wesley knocked, tentatively, she was answered by a rap, and when she looked under the bed, "something like a badger" ran out and escaped.

After this the daughters confessed at breakfast that ever since the 1st of December they had heard strange noises, groans, and knockings in nearly every room of the house. Susannah and Ann Wesley, when below stairs in the dining room, had heard, first at the door, then over their heads, and under their feet, strange rappings from rooms which were at the time empty. Emily Wesley coming down-stairs one night at ten o'clock, to methodically "draw up" the clock and lock the doors as usual in that regular family, heard under the staircase a crash among some bottles; yet when she looked nothing was broken and nothing was there. Raps had also been heard by the servants in both kitchens, at the doors, against a partition, and overhead, while one of the maids had distinguished groans as of a dying man at all hours of the night. Footsteps had been heard as if some one were going up and down-stairs, and there had been "vast rumblings" below stairs as well as in the garret. A man who slept in the garret, had heard someone pass his bed, and apparently disturb his shoes, though there were none there. There had also been heard a gobbling like a turkey-cock, noises in the nursery, and apparently dance in a locked up matted chamber next the nursery.

Mrs. Wesley had at first persuaded her daughters and the servants that rats inside, or drunken men outside the house, were the only disturbers; but fear soon converted her to the general notion of the ghost. But why not have told before the father, husband, master, and

general protector? The reason was, that there prevailed a village superstition that no person to whom such noises boded ill could ever hear them. Now that they had increased, and were the universal wonder and terror of the house, now, moreover, that Mr. Wesley himself had heard them, no further concealment was possible or necessary. Besides, the spirits could have no power unless it was given from above. To warn or exercise those dumb and foolish spirits would indeed be a great privilege, thought Mr. Wesley, in the natural pride of the moment.

The night after the appearance of the badger under the nursery bed, the noises broke out about one o'clock with triumphant violence. There was no hope of sleep. Bravely the rector arose, and his wife insisted on sharing his danger. The two went together into every room up and down stairs, and in nearly every chamber they entered they heard the noises in the room they had just left. At the bottom of the stairs they heard the crash Emily had described among the bottles, as if they had all broken to pieces, and then a jangling splash, as though a peck of money had been emptied at their feet. They then went cautiously through the hall into the kitchen, and there they rather shuddered to see the big mastiff come whining towards them. It had never indeed barked since the first night. Only supernatural and unseen visitors, the rector argued could have so alarmed a ferocious dog.

The mastiff appeared more frightened than the children. The rector, and his wife also, heard "rattling and thundering" in every room of the house except his study, where as yet the vexatious ghost had not intruded.

After about an hour the worthy and credulous pair returned to bed. The satisfied ghost did not materially disturb them any more that night. On Wednesday, December the 26th, a little before ten, Emily Wesley heard in the nursery a sound which usually proceeded the noises, a vibration like the difficult winding up of a jack. Calling her father and mother, they all listened and there came raps from below at the bed foot, and head, and under the bed. The rector went down-stairs and knocked with his stick at the smoky joists of the kitchen ceiling. The ghost answered as often as it was questioned. But when the rector knocked a peculiar change, such as he used to do at his own door (one, two, three, four, five, six, seven) it seemed to puzzle the mimetic ghost, who failed to answer in the same manner, though the children afterwards heard it give the same kind of tat-tat two or three times on other occasions.

Going anxiously into the nursery, the rector found the knocking under the bed and at the bed's head continuing intermittingly, the children starting and moving in their sleep, and at last awakening. The good father staying there alone to guard them, bade them go quietly to sleep again, and sat at the bed's foot watching them.

When the sounds began again, Mr. Wesley very gravely asked the ghost who he was, and why he disturbed innocent children, and did not come to him in his study, in a decorous way, and there tell him plainly what he wanted. Soon after there came a farewell knock at the outside of the house, and then the purposeless ghost "knocked off" for the night.

During these visitations, when Mr. Wesley, at prayers, mentioned the the names of King George the First and the prince—"Jeffrey," as the family, by this time growing accustomed to the troublesome ghost, began to familiarily call the spirit would make a great noise overhead so that he was shrewdly suspected of being a Jacobite. Three times (probably in the dark) the astonished rector was pushed by "invisible power," once against the corner of his study desk, once against the door of the matted chamber (a favourite haunt of "Jeffrey"), and a third time against the right-hand side of his study door as he was going in. At all hours, day and night, with lights and without, the puzzled rector followed the noises through every room of his house, alone, and with others, waiting to interrogate the spirit, and entreating it to answer. Yet on no occasion did there come any articulate voice, and only once or twice two or three squeaks, like the loud chirping of a bird, which was probably only caused by rats.

On Friday, December 28th, Mr. Wesley had to pay a visit to a friend, but the noises were so boisterous on the Thursday night that he did not care to leave his startled family. A Mr. Hoole, of Haxley, came therefore at his request, and spent the Friday night with him. Soon after ten the sounds began as usual, and the same performances were gone through.

From that time till January 24th, Jeffrey was quiet. That morning, when the prayer for the king was read, there were the usual protesting knocks. At night, when the king and prince were mentioned, they came again, and louder, and one very loud knock at the "Amen" was heard at the door. After nine, Robert Brown the servant-man, sitting alone by the kitchen fire, saw, as clearly as eyes can see anything, something like a small rabbit come out of the copper-hole, with its ears down, and dart up and run round in a circle five times. Robert ran after it with the tongs, but losing it, grew frightened, and ran to tell one of the maids in the parlour. On Friday, the 25th, there being prayers in the church, Mr. Wesley left out the prayers for the King George and the Prince at home, and at this concession to "Jeffrey" there was no knocking.

One morning, on reviving King George and the Prince, the interruption began again, and eleven persons in the room distinctly heard the knocks.

One night, directly Mr. Wesley spoke to the noises, they ceased. Gradually the family grew more indifferent to the sounds, and about the end of January, 1717, they ceased.

Victor Hugo's Creed.

Victor Hugo believed in God; there is hardly a page of his lyrical productions where the name of God does not occur.

The last clauses of his will, written some time before his death, were in these simple words: "I refuse the public prayers of all the churches, I beg a prayer of every soul. I believe in God." His God is one that hears prayer. One of his finest pieces begins thus, "Daughter, go and pray." And he enumerates all the beings for whom the child should pray, then concludes, "Pray for me."

To a friend who had sent him some lines concerning the Bible, he writes: "I believe in the same God as yourself, but he is nearer than yours; there is not between him and me the intermediary of an idolatry and of a book." This does not mean that he did not revere the Bible; for in one passage in his writings he says, "Sow the villages with the gospels,—put a Bible into every cottage." Again he writes, "There is a book more philosophical than 'Le Compère Matthieu,' more popular than 'Le Constitutionnel,' more eternal than the 'Chart of 1830,'—it is the Holy Scripture."

Victor Hugo was very much of an Emersonian Transcendentalist. He revered all other messages from God, but preferred to receive his own *first hand* from his Maker.

He believed in the fatherhood of God, but rejected the doctrine of the deity of Jesus, and his miraculous birth and sonship. To him "Jesus was a man like Socrates and Plato, higher, of course, but only separated from them by degrees of greatness and inspiration, not by essence."

He believed in the brotherhood of man. He writes, "Treat all men as Jesus would treat them were he here now,—Jesus, who knew more than Voltaire." He believed in the immortality of every soul. He says, "Give to the people who work and suffer, give to the people for whom this world is bad, the belief in a better world made for them." The following is his confession: "I am conscious within myself of the certainty of a future life. The nearer I approach my end the clearer do I hear the immortal symphonies of worlds that call me to themselves. For half a century I have been outpouring my volumes of thought in prose and in verse, in history, philosophy, drama, romance, ode and ballad, yet I appear to myself not to have said a thousandth part of what is within me, and when I am laid in the tomb, I shall not reckon that my life is finished; the grave is not a *cul-de-sac*, it is an avenue; death is the sublime prolongation of life, not its dreary finish; it closes in the twilight, it opens in the dawn. My work is only begun. I yearn for it to become brighter and nobler, and this craving for the infinite demonstrates that there is an infinity."

Victor Hugo did not admit the dogma of eternal punishment, but held firmly to the belief in future progress. "Let me," he says, "only live on through my future existence; let me continue the work I have begun; let me surmount the perils, the passions, the agonies, that age after age may be before me, and who shall tell whether I may not rise to have a place in the council chamber of the Ruler that controls all,

and whom we own as God?" Everyone who has read his works knows that it was no easy-going carelessness which he preached. Every page of his writings is an exposition of the Bible text, "The *way* of the transgressor is hard." He held up conscience as the voice of God, which cannot be disobeyed without some fatal consequence. Every one knows the beautiful poem "La Conscience," the story of Cain fleeing away before the eye of God. This subject is amply illustrated in Jean Valjean's moral struggle, and the author's "Chatiments," and his "Napoleon le Petit." Any one who question the sanity and beauty of the religion of Victor Hugo, has only to read "Le Pape," "La Pitié Suprême," "Religions et Religion," and "Le Fin de Satan." Victor Hugo's greatest lesson for the world is, perhaps, the lesson of *forgiveness*, both human and divine, which runs like a golden thread through his books and his own life.

He is pre-eminently the poet of charity. It was that more than anything else which made him the man of the people, and caused his death to be universally lamented. Nobody had more than himself the burden of human misery and misfortune on his heart. He was by his eloquent pleadings the means of saving many a head from the guillotine. His "Le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné" is a volume of special pleading for the abolition of capital punishment. "The head of a man . . . cultivate it, water it, fecundate it, enlighten it, moralize it, utilize it; you will not need to cut it off."

Those who want to know how well he understood the law of charity, which is the golden law of the Christian religion, have only to read his "Les Misérables," the one book which will keep his name fresh and alive in the great heart of the reading world for ever. In his view man is not depraved, but good by nature. Do not keep him in ignorance and under the yoke of tyranny; treat bim kindly, and there will be an end of crime and misery.

Finally, let me say that the one great unmistakable, conspicuous principle which pervades every page of his writings, is this: There is a possibility of regeneration for every human being, however degraded he may be, and the means of this regeneration is love. Jean Valjean, the convict, is won to a good and useful life by the love of the good Bishop Myriel; Quasimodo, the hateful monster, becomes a good man when Esmeralda pities him; Triboulet's love for his daughter washes him from his crimes; the love of Marion Delorme for Didier, of Lucrezia Borgia for her son, gives those two women a finer womanhood, a new nobility, a greater glory.

JAMES BAGLEY.

"All Souls are Mine."

"All souls are mine!" Thus said the Lord,
In far off ancient time,
To prophets who proclaimed His word
In sunny eastern clime.

"All souls are mine!" God spake to Paul,
"The Gentile as the Jew;
"Preach ye the Christ's good news to all,
"Not to the favoured few."

"All souls are mine!" the Voice was heard
By Wyclif in our land.
"The common folk shall read my word,—
"Pass it from hand to hand."

"All souls are mine!" The trumpet sound
Shook the new world's snug peace;
"Children of God like beasts are bound,
"Lo, slavery must cease!"

"All souls are mine!" Alas, we need
The cry still in our day;
The pride of race and class and creed
Has not yet passed away.

"All souls are mine!" Whate'er our part,
In gifts, or thought, or fame,
The same life beats in every heart;
Our Father is the same.

"All souls are mine!" God gives to each
Some thought of His to hold;
And no man perfect thought can reach,—
Truth is so manifold.

"All souls are mine!" Ah, how God yearns
To join His children's hands!
Slowly, yet surely, His world learns,
And love spreads through the lands.

All souls are God's. He holds us all
In His great heart of love,
And sends His shepherd sons to call
All to one fold above.

E. C. F.

Belfast, October, 1898.

A German Stratford-on-Avon.

Bold as this title may appear to English readers, there is none more appropriate that I could prefix to an article recounting a visit to Weimar, from which I have just returned. Nay, I am not sure whether even such a phrase is not less than adequate to describe the associations which the name of Weimar calls up in every German; for while Stratford was the scene only of Shakespeare's early and closing years, at Weimar there lived and worked within the same generation at least four of Germany's greatest poets. When you name it, you name also Goethe and Schiller, Herder and Wieland, you name the golden age of German literature, which to have fostered is the undying glory of one of those minor sovereigns who still survive in Teutonic lands, a not unpleasant anachronism. William the Pyramidal may be forgotten or accounted for little in centuries to come; but so long as great literature lives, men will honour the name of Carl August, Grand Duke of Saxony, who chose to build up for himself a sure immortality by becoming the friend and patron of his country's most illustrious sons.

From Jena to Weimar it is a short journey; so, the day promising to be fine, we proposed to make use of our opportunity forthwith, and set out upon our pilgrimage. Three-quarters of an hour's leisurely railway journey brought us to the literary Mecca; the broad, magnificent avenue, half a mile long, leading from the large station to the town itself, forced upon our recollection with something of despair the miserable approach of dingy streets the visitor to Oxford is compelled to traverse ere the glories of "the High" burst upon him. Passing upon the right a dignified monument to the warriors who fell in the war of 1870, we presently came upon the Museum, too early, however, for admission; hence, after admiring its admirable position and the prettily laid-out gardens surrounding it, we decided to loiter on for awhile until the hour of opening. We had intended, out of reverence for the poet Herder, who lies buried in its nave, and with a desire to see a famous Crucifixion by Cranach exhibited there, to inspect the Peter-Pauls Kirche; seeing, however, a stream of worshippers wending their way in, we presently joined them in order to attend morning service. Of the interior of the Church little need be remarked, since in no sense can it be said to make an appeal to the sense of beauty; nor was the singing either tuneful or harmonious, though the organ boomed out Luther's "A mighty stronghold is our God" bravely enough. The congregation was numerous, but with a preponderance of the fair sex which we do not remember to have seen equalled in any English church; indeed, the absence of men made the few who attended almost conspicuous. The service proper, consisting largely of responses, being ended, the preacher appeared in the sky-high pulpit, and we bent forward expectantly to listen. The sermon we heard was an eloquent one, certainly, considered as oratory; but as regards contents, it resolved itself into a glorification of the German Emperor, who on that day was entering into Jerusalem, and a denunciation of the Roman Church, of which the preacher was pleased to find the prototype in the wicked and unmerciful servant of Mat. xviii.

But indifferently edified, to be candid, by this deliverance, we were nothing loth to make our way out of the building, and retraced our steps to the Museum, now open—there is no question as to the Sunday opening of Fine Art Galleries in Germany. The erection of such an edifice as this, and the housing of such art treasures in a small provincial town, are of course due to the initiative of an enlightened reigning family; I will not weary the reader by an enumeration of pictures and statues—among the latter copies of the best works of the antique and of Michael Angelo—and merely mention a magnificent marble group representing Goethe and Psyche, and the wonderful series of frescoes by Preller, depicting the adventures of Odysseus.

Having, with what scanty leisure we had at our command, examined the chief contents of the Museum, we proceeded, past the beautiful Karlsplatz, in the direction of the theatre, to view the monument erected on the space in front of it to the *dioscuri* of German letters, Goethe and Schiller, by an admiring country. This monument, designed by Rietschel, and unveiled in 1857, makes a profound impression upon the beholder; the two great poets, friends during their lifetime, stand side by side, Goethe holding a laurel wreath which Schiller touches with

one hand, while the other bears a manuscript roll. The Olympian serenity—the *Abgeklærtheit*—of Goethe, the pure idealism of Schiller, are brought to marvellous expression by the sculptor; and innocent of adornment as is the playhouse which these statues front, it is the faithful guardian of the classical tradition, where what is permanent rather than what is passing in dramatic art is most frequently performed before appreciative audiences.

And now along the street which Schiller must have trod times without number, and which bears his name, the street where his house stands, an unpretentious building enough, with nothing to arrest the hurrying footsteps of the passer-by but the simple inscription: *Hier wohnte Schiller*. It was in this modest abode, on the second floor, that the poet spent the last years of his all too brief existence, after he had given up the uncongenial toil of his professional chair at Jena—toil which, however, has yielded us his admirable histories of the Thirty Years' War, and the Dutch Rebellion. *Hier wohnte Schiller*: what memories the words call up of moving poetry, of imperishable dramatic creations, of appeals to all that is highest and best in individual and national character! The place is holy ground, and though the memorials preserved of its inhabitant be few, we cannot pass it without entering in, and—yes, we must purchase small busts of the two great brothers in song.

A few steps further now, a turn round the corner, and Goethe's house, now the National Goethe Museum, lies before us. This, too, is a perfectly plain structure outside, yet its extent and an air of solidity lend it a dignity befitting the residence of that favourite of the gods who from bourgeois beginnings at Frankfurt rose to a position of unexampled literary and poetical pre-eminence, enjoyed that position for a generation, and died after a long period of personal friendship with his sovereign, as the Grand Duke's Prime Minister, at the age of eighty-three, "full of years, riches, and honour." You pay your modest entrance fee, and try to realise that you are ascending the staircase leading to the rooms of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe—Goethe who wrote "Faust"—Goethe whom Napoleon saw, and exclaimed, "*Voilà un homme!*"; Goethe, the infinitely various and many-sided, who composed the sweetest lyrics in the German tongue, and also a *Theory of Colours*, who was an artist and art critic, and made anatomical discoveries as well; who was realist and classic by turns, master of prose and poetry, in whom was summed up the genius of a whole race.

As you pace through these many rooms, gently ciceroned by excellent official guides, you begin to feel the power and range of the mind that moved in this house. These drawings of Italian landscapes, showing a fine sense of colour and atmosphere, are by his own hand. There are the collections he made of engravings, there his numismatic, his mineralogical, his musical treasures, his natural history cabinet, his cameos and miniatures. There are the pictures he collected, the remains he brought with him from Pompeii, the electrical instruments with which he experimented. The whole building, indeed, is crammed with associations artistic, literary, historical: here (living together more closely!) stand rich presents from exalted personages, there the piano rendered memorable by Mendelssohn's touch upon its keys.

And now we are in the poet's holy of holies, left exactly as it was in his lifetime, the two severely simple rooms where he worked and slept, the little bedroom where he died. At this plain table he used to sit, his elbows resting on a cushion, dictating to Eckermann seated opposite. On a high desk near the window there remains undisturbed a plate full of earth which he had brought in from the garden the day before his death in order to examine it microscopically, and there stands the arm-chair in which, after a brief illness, he expired. A laurel wreath lies on the narrow bed; and as you take reverend leave of the house and regain the open air, dwelling upon the number of activities in which this universal mind achieved excellence, you repeat Napoleon's unconscious plagiarism from Shakespeare: "He was a man."

It were a hopeless task to exhaust the sights of Weimar in a day; so we discover, and decide to leave the Grand Ducal Palace, the Library, the Mausoleum where princes and poets lie buried side by side, for another occasion. But the park situated by the charming river Ilm, this we can still visit; thither accordingly we go and soon find ourselves surrounded by trees glorious with every tint of autumn, from palest

amber to burnished gold and brightest red, yet with green tones still mingling with the others and telling of the summer that is gone. How this bold and daring pageant of nature reconciles one with the waning of the year! A light gust of wind rustles through the branches and we find ourselves as in a golden rain; we saunter along the river which bears on its surface a load of flushed and yellowed leaves, along the avenues where Goethe and Schiller walked, and both the natural aspects of the scene and the associations it calls up, speak of a passing and of a past: yet there is nothing of pain in the thought, but rather a great calm, a serene joy in the great work achieved by all rare and noble spirits, work that is in essence immortal; a deep content that that which is worthy to last endures, and that which would but cumber the ground is carried down the stream of time, as the autumn leaves float upon the Ilm. And the river murmurs, the branches whisper, soothingly, assuringly, the closing lines of Goethe's exquisite slumber song:

Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch . . .

J. WARSCHAUER.

The Books of Life.

The real books have life in them: they are made great by the fulness and worth of the life they disclose. A book can be great only by the force of the life it contains,—its sweetness, charm, purity, depth, and wholeness. Nothing else is worth putting into a book, because nothing else is worth writing about or describing.

We say that books are to be measured by their genius, by the mental greatness of the author, or by the loftiness of his imagination; but these are only minor tests, or, rather, they are but means of expressing how much life they contain. The vital quality is the real one, —the one which gives colour, power, insight, style. The attempt to write forcibly is a failure unless there is depth and richness of life to disclose. Style comes of itself when there is something to say, and no amount of it will cover up poverty of life.

A true book is lived before it is written,—that is, it grows out of experience; and it can disclose nothing more than what the writer has seen and heard. If his experience has been narrow and mean, that will get into his book; and his parochial view of the world will disclose itself, however great or important the topic of which he writes. It is equally true, however, that one need not have wandered into every clime in order to have learned wisdom; for life is always great with the greatness of the mind that looks upon it.

Does a book make us feel that life is beautiful, that its sacrifices are worthy, and that it rests upon strong, eternal foundations? Then it is a worthy book, and we can afford to read it. Does it make us ashamed that we are alive, and ashamed of the men and women who are in the world with us? Then we would do well to pass it by, however much it is talked about or however brilliant the genius it discloses. Disease does not give vigor, power, or beauty, in a person or in a book. It is only health which makes life whole, and gives to it all the qualities of soundness. It is the healthy book we need,—the book of good digestion, steady nerves, strong limbs, and vigorous habit of life. If we live in a sick-chamber, we get the tone of its inmate: we see life impaired and melancholy. So it is that association with books of unsound life impair our whole mental nature: they make us pessimistic in our thought and morbid in our feelings.

Not all persons of sound life are athletes, and not all books of vital power are heroic in tone or polemical in style. It is the tone, the attitude which reveals health. The sound book sees life cheerfully, with faith in its future, with conviction of its permanent worth. When we have read it, we feel stronger, more courageous, more confident of where we are and of what we wish to do. It may not have solved all problems for us: perhaps it has not settled any. But it has made us more hopeful that they can be solved. We go forth from companionship with them, grown young again, with the youth of our feelings renewed, with the bright side of life coming naturally most often into our thought.

The book of vital power is alive in every part of it: it is not more a book of thought

than it is of feeling and imagination. It sees not only the present, but it is aware of the future. It roots itself in material interests, but it lifts these to the plane of the spiritual and eternal. It is aglow with the hopes of the life we are living to-day, and it is in touch with the life which the past discloses. It has a sturdy recognition of what is real, but it will not overlook the perpetual charm of the ideal. This range of interest and sympathy is the mark of the live book, some of it hinted at, and some of it needing to be assumed from the author's general attitude of mind, but all of it necessary to make it clear that a man wholly alive has spoken to us. If he is alive, he cannot keep it out of his book, and he cannot keep it from thrilling us with the life which is his own.

It is such books we need, with their gospel of life, health, soundness, vitality of spirit. All other books could well be put out of the world. It would be for the world's good if they did not come into it. When they do come into it, we need not feel it is our business to read them or to give them our acclamation. The crusade against bad books should be changed into a propagandism in behalf of those which are good. Yet it may be said that the books with vital power in them can well defend themselves, for they are the only ones which have any promise of human immortality.

"The Gospel of Joy."*

This is a noble volume of sermons by one of the greatest preachers of the day. It is issued as a companion to a previous volume on "The Old Testament and Modern Life." As that dealt with the saints and heroes of the Old Testament, "The Gospel of Joy" is devoted to the ideals and teachings of the New Testament. It has all Mr. Brooke's charm of style, clearness of thought, and frankness of statement. They are sermons which have the advantage of being both literature and oratory. It is not often that the two are combined. The sermons that are literature fail for the most part as oratory, and a great deal of effective preaching fails as literature. We often wonder in reading the sermons of some noted preacher what made them so telling at the time, for, in perusing them at home, they strike one as commonplace and dull, without any originality of thought or distinction of style. Something has passed away in the change from the pulpit to the press. There was a strong vivid personality in the pulpit which gave these very ordinary productions colour, weight, and emphasis. But on the printed page all this is lost, and we wonder what was the secret of the preacher's power. It was in himself, and not in anything he said. Now and then, however, a preacher arises, like Robertson of Brighton, whose sermons are as good to read as to hear. The preacher's personality has not altogether evaporated. A heart is beating, the warmth and movement of great sympathies and a powerful imagination are there. The atmosphere of poetry is there, and, in addition, we come under the spell of strong and original thinking. All this we have in the various volumes of sermons Mr. Brooke has published, and in none more conspicuously than in "The Gospel of Joy." As we read we seem to hear that thrilling voice, to see that speaking face, to be one of a crowd of eager listeners dominated by that great personality. For while Mr. Brooke's sermons are literature they are not essays. They have the notes of urgency and persuasion, and although they are read they are also preached. Some men read their sermons all their life and never preach. The distinction is vital. We commend Mr. Brooke's new volume to our readers. It is profitable for instruction, and for the sustenance of the higher life.

*_The Gospel of Joy_, a Volume of Sermons by Stopford A. Brooke. London: Isbister and Co. Price 6s.

Imperfections.

I wonder if ever a song was sung
But the singer's heart sang sweeter!
I wonder if ever a rhyme was rung
But the thought surpassed the metre!
I wonder if ever a sculptor wrought
Till the cold stone echoed his ardent thought!
Or if ever a painter, with light and shade,
The dream of his inmost heart portrayed!

I wonder if ever a rose was found,
And there might not be a fairer!
Or if ever a glittering gem was ground,
And we dreamed not of a rarer!
Ah! never on earth shall we find the best,
But it waits for us in the land of rest;
And a perfect thing we shall never behold
Till we pass the portal of shining gold.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

Always Growing.

What do you do in the ground, little seed,
Under the rain and snow,
Hidden away from the bright blue sky,
And lost to the madcap sparrow's eye?
"Why, do you not know?
I grow."

What do you do in the nest, little bird,
When the bough springs to and fro?
How do you pass the time away
From dawn to dusk of the summer's day?
"What, do you not know?
I grow."

What do you do in the pond, little fish,
With scales that glisten so?
In and out of the water-grass,
Never at rest, I see you pass.
"Why, do you not know?
I grow."

What do you do in the cradle, my boy,
With chubby cheeks all aglow;
What do you do when your toys are put
Away, and your wise little eyes are shut?
"Ho! do you not know?
I grow."

Always growing! by night or day
No idle moments we see;
Whether at work or cheerful play,
Let us all be able to say,
In the goodness of God
We grow.

The Coming of Christmas Day.

The sunny summer months are gone,
The autumn, too, is past;
The birds to milder climes have flown,
Cold blows the wintry blast.
The great trees sway their branches bare,
With melancholy sound.
The feathery flakes are in the air,
And white is all the ground.

But in the home a hearty cheer
On walls and faces glows.
The firelight dances red and clear,
And mocks at winter's snows.
And on the street, with nimble feet,
The children romp and play;
And laugh and shout are ringing out
To welcome Christmas Day.

Yes, hail! and welcome without end!
Thou day that gave to earth
The rarest gift that heaven could send,
In Christ our Saviour's birth,
That through the centuries of years
Hast echoed still one song
Of peace and love from God above
To earth's swift pressing throng.

But thou'lt see many a care-worn face,
And many a tear-dimmed eye;
Thou'lt hear the moan of hearts left lone
And the pitiful children's cry.
For the world is heavy with many woes,
And sick with the pains of sin,
And never such need for the Christmas creed
Its way in the world to win.

Yes, welcome! and teach us, thou Christmas Guest,
The secret of realms on high;
Let this Christmastide in our souls abide,
A fountain of charity.
Henceforth, in the spirit of Mary's son,
May we order our works and ways,
Till the kingdoms of earth and heaven are one,
And all days Christmas days.

CHARLES E. PERKINS.

A Nursery Song.

Oh, Peterkin Pout and Gregory Grout
Are two little goblins black!
Full oft from my house I've driven them out,
But somehow they still come back.
They clamber up to the baby's mouth,
And pull the corners down;
They perch aloft on the baby's brow,
And twist it into a frown;
And one says, "Shall!" and t'other says, "Shant!"
And one says, "Must!" and t'other says "Can't!"
Oh, Peterkin Pout and Gregory Grout,
I pray you now, from my house keep out!

But Samuel Smile and Lemuel Laugh
Are two little fairies light:
They're always ready for fun and chaff,
And sunshine is their delight.
And, when they creep into baby's eyes,
Why, there the sunbeams are;
And when they peep through her rosy lips,
Her laughter rings near and far.
And one says, "Please!" and t'other says "Do!"
And both together say, "I love you!"
So, Lemuel Laugh and Samuel Smile,
Come in, my dears, and tarry awhile!